

REMARKS

Claims 7, 8 and 10-16 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 7, 8, 10 and 11 are amended. Claims 7 is amended to over come the 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejections. Claims 8, 10 and 11 are amended to correct dependency. Claims 1-6 and 9 are canceled.

No new matter is added by this Amendment. Support for the language added to claim 7 can be found in the original specification and claims such as, for example, original claims 1, 5 and 9.

I. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

A. Claims 1-4

Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,932,387 ("Yamamoto") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,153,346 ("Maehata") and U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0053492 ("Suwabe"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants point out that claims 1-4 have been canceled. As such, this rejection is now moot. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are thus respectfully requested.

B. Claims 5-16

Claims 5-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Yamamoto in view of Maehata and Suwabe, and further in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0061133 ("Ohta"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants point out that claims 5, 6 and 9 have been canceled.

None of the references, in combination or alone, teaches or suggests an image forming method in which the peripheral speed of the electrostatic latent image holding member is 200 mm/sec or greater as recited in claim 7.

Typically, if the peripheral speed of the electrostatic latent image holding member is higher, the developing time is shorter but the quality of the image concentration is lower. See page 5, lines 2-12 of the specification. However, the method recited in claims 7, 8 and 10-16 makes it possible to achieve excellent image quality while still increasing the peripheral speed of the electrostatic latent image holding member.

Applicants submit that not one of the references teaches or suggests a peripheral speed of 200 mm/sec or greater. In fact, the apparatuses according to Yamamoto, Maehata and Suwabe all have an electrostatic image holding member with a peripheral speed of less than 200 mm/sec (the apparatuses covered by the description and claims of these references are manufactured by the assignee of the present application). Further, Ohta does not teach that the electrostatic latent image holding member has a minimum peripheral speed.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that Yamamoto, Maehata, Suwabe and Ohta, in combination or alone, do not teach or suggest all of the limitation recited in claims 7, 8 and 10-16. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

Claim 6, 7, 12 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. In particular, the Patent Office alleges that the use of the term "dot-concentrated type screen" is indefinite. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants submit that the term dot-concentrated type screen is known to one of ordinary skill in the art and is also described in the specification. A "dot-concentrated type screen" refers collectively to line-screen or dot-screen methods of forming an image by forming an electrostatic image on an electrostatic charge image carrier using a laser beam. Line-screen imaging refers to forming an electrostatic latent image on an electrostatic charge image carrier image line by line, while dot-screen refers to forming such an electrostatic latent

image dot by dot. See, for example, pages 21 to 23 of the specification. The specification further discloses the manner in which each pixel is recorded and not recorded.

As the specification is clear as to the meaning of a dot-concentrated type screen, Applicants submit that the concentration and size of the dot, as alleged by the Patent Office, is not pertinent to the definition of the dot-concentrated type screen.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claims 7, 12 and 16 are definite. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 7, 8 and 10-16 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

Leana Levin

James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Leana Levin
Registration No. 51,939

JAO:LL/hs

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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